



City scores well again in tobacco control

Glendale earns an A for its regulations, but some say they aren't being enforced

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Glendale and Burbank maintained their high marks in 2010 for overall tobacco-control efforts, according to a report from the American Lung Assn.

The association released its "State of Tobacco Control" report Thursday, giving Glendale an A and Burbank a B in overall tobacco regulation.

Glendale was one of nine cities in Los Angeles County to receive the highest grade and has maintained that score for a third straight year. Burbank was one of 20 cities throughout the county to get a B in overall tobacco control.

"Our [ordinance] is as strong as any other that can be put up against ours," said Greg Herrmann, Burbank's community development director.

Burbank's smoke-free housing grade improved from D in 2009 to C last year, while Glendale got a B in the same category.

Herrmann said he was disappointed Burbank's grades didn't improve more in the smoke-free housing category since the city passed a ban on smoking in most areas of multi-unit residential buildings.

But he said he expects the city's grade to improve in that category next year.

Glendale adopted a ban in April 2010 on smoking in patios and balconies of condominium complexes and apartment buildings.

But implementing the ban has been a work in progress, said Steven Koszis, an analyst for the city's Neighborhood Services Division.

"It's just really difficult to implement overnight," he said.

City officials have been trying to educate apartment building and condo owners about the new ban and advising them to change smoking rooms to nonsmoking once the renter's lease is up, Koszis said.

Both cities earned an A for their efforts to reduce tobacco sales.

And while Burbank received a B in smoke-free outdoor air, Glendale earned an A.

Both cities banned smoking in almost all public places several years ago.

But some say Glendale still has a long way to go before catching up to other smoke-restricting cities.

"Everybody smokes in Glendale, especially because you can't in Burbank," 20-year-old Burbank resident Kristine Heroian said. "This is like their last resort."

Los Angeles resident Diego Acuña, a smoker, said he didn't consider smoking in Glendale to be a challenge.

"Everybody smokes here," he said.

While he has never received a smoking citation, Acuña, 24, said having some regulations on the books helps reduce secondhand smoke.

The association began grading cities on their smoking ordinances, or lack thereof, to reduce secondhand smoking and promote better air quality, said Paul Knepprath, the association's vice president of advocacy and health initiatives.

In issuing its annual report, he said the association is hoping more cities and counties institute stricter smoking rules.

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